

Rep. Shay Schual-Berke:

REDUCING PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS



Rep. Schual-Berke, a retired cardiologist, is chair of the Financial Institutions & Insurance Committee and a member of the Health Care Committee.

When I sponsored Washington’s successful Patients’ Bill of Rights, I warned other reforms and consumer protections were necessary to ensure people have access to health care they need at prices they can afford. This year we finally passed a Prescription Drug Bill! Health care experts will create a “preferred drug list” based on scientific evidence; using this list will enable the state to negotiate bulk purchasing discounts to save taxpayers millions of dollars. Since doctors know their patients best, however, any doctor can still ensure that prescriptions are filled exactly as written, even if the medicine is not on the preferred drug list.

The state’s discounts will be made available to about 590,000 low-income persons over age 50. The new reforms launch an outreach system to help everyone find lower prices for medications. I’m proud of these historic reforms, but as the only medical doctor in the Legislature I know there is still more to do. It isn’t only our seniors who need this kind of help.

I’m also pleased the Legislature enacted a directive I sponsored to reduce paperwork, taxpayer costs and the time it takes to process medical claims by streamlining the bureaucratic nightmare of our health care system. I’ll continue to do my best to make sure you have access to quality and affordable health care.

Rep. Dave Upthegrove:

STANDING UP FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

As a member of the Fisheries, Ecology and Parks Committee, I stood up to the special interests to protect our environment and enhance our quality of life. I believe in defending the public interest in the management of our state’s precious natural resources.

- ✓ Passed legislation to reduce dangerous mercury in the environment.
- ✓ Led efforts to protect wildlife by maintaining the ban on use of certain cruel and inhumane steel-jaw leghold traps and poisons.
- ✓ Increased investments in the oil spill rescue tug to protect clean water in Puget Sound.
- ✓ As Vice-Chair of the Local Government Committee, I helped prevent suburban sprawl by blocking efforts to undermine the Growth Management Act.
- ✓ Vigorously opposed harmful water legislation that put profits for a few before healthy salmon runs for all.



“In order to have good jobs and a strong economy, we need to keep Washington a great place to live.”

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Report to the Community



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Report to the Community

September 2003

Dear Friends,

It was a difficult legislative session in Olympia this year, but we responded to our state’s economic troubles with a balanced approach that put the concerns of our community first. As you’ll see inside, by working cooperatively with Democrats and Republicans alike, we were able to ensure continued funding for many local priorities.

The state budget ultimately approved by the Legislature, however, fell far short of what we could support. We simply could not vote for a budget that cut \$600 million from public schools and eliminated health insurance for an estimated 20,000 low-income children. It is our view that the state has a responsibility – even in tough economic times – to ensure that every child receives a world-class education and can go to a doctor when necessary.

Much of our work this session was focused on improving the business climate in South King County and throughout the state - the best way to keep our economy moving and avoid future budget problems. Recognizing that Boeing plants in Renton and Auburn anchor the manufacturing industry in the Kent Valley, we successfully supported a tax incentive package that will only go into effect if Boeing builds its 7E7 Dreamliner in our state. We addressed another top economic priority by approving the first new transportation funding in 13 years – an investment that will boost our economy by reducing congestion, increasing highway safety and creating 3,000 new jobs this year.

Another area in which we made historic progress was in passing reforms to reduce the cost of prescription drugs. This was a major victory for seniors, the disabled, and those who receive state-funded health insurance. Finally, we continued to push for expanded environmental protections in order to preserve the natural beauty of our state.

Inside you’ll find out more about these and other accomplishments from the 2003 legislative session. As always, we value your input and encourage you to contact us at anytime.

Sincerely,

Shay

Dave

Rep. Shay Schual-Berke and Rep. Dave Upthegrove

33rd District Legislative Report

WORKING HARD FOR THE 33RD LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT:

▶ Helping Our Cities

\$229,200 for Normandy Park
\$117,000 for Des Moines

▶ Transportation

Widening lanes on I-5, Safety Improvements on SR 99 and SR 509. Additional work on SR 516 and SR 167.

▶ Highline Community College

\$29 million for a childcare facility and a Higher Education Center

▶ Safety Improvements on SR 167 and 516

\$2 million for SR 167.
\$2.5 million for SR 516.

▶ Noise Mitigation for Highline Schools

The state's share this year is \$10 million. Eventually the total will be \$200 million.

▶ Sea-Tac Occupational Skills Center

Helping our kids train for the future at the Sea-Tac OSC.

▶ PICC - Kent

Restoring direct, dedicated funding for the country's only clinic for drug-affected infants.



Photo courtesy City of Normandy Park.

Helping our Cities

The 2003-2005 Operating Budget includes money for Des Moines (\$229,200) and Normandy Park (\$117,000) to help pay for basic expenses including emergency services. Funding for local government was reduced dramatically with the passage of I-695 – eliminating the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax.

Transportation: I-5, SR 509, SR 99

The transportation package we passed this year will deliver important safety and mobility improvements to the 33rd district. \$55 million will be spent on widening I-5 between Tukwila and the Pierce County Line. Another \$1.5 million will go toward safety improvements on SR 99 and a little more than \$3 million will be spent on design work and purchasing rights of way for the extension of SR 509.



Photo courtesy of Highline Community College.

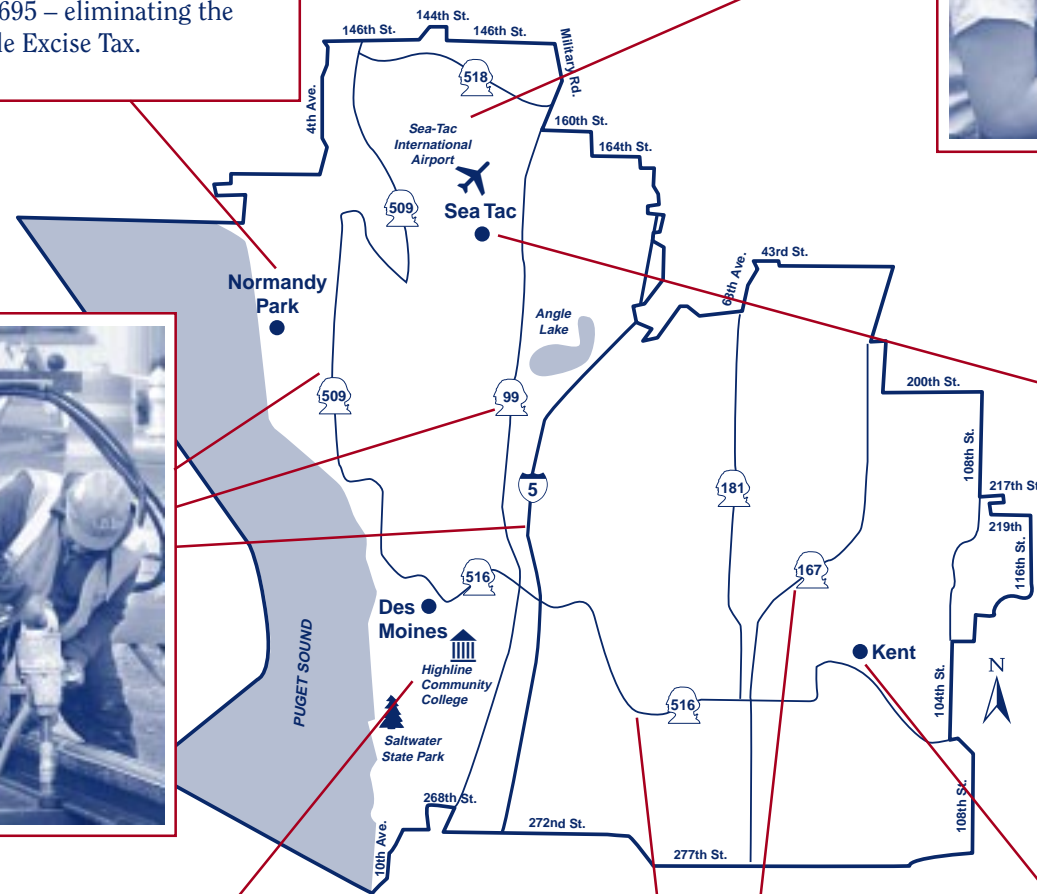
Highline Community College

Also included in the 2003-2005 Capital Budget is \$29 million for Highline Community College to build a needed childcare facility and a Higher Education Center to better accommodate the partnership with Central Washington University for on-site four-year degree programs.



Safety Improvements on SR 167 and 516

The transportation plan also includes more funding for safety improvements on SR 167 (\$2 million), and SR 516 (\$2.5 million).



Noise Mitigation for Highline Schools

The 2003-2005 Capital Budget includes \$15 million over the next two years to finally noise-insulate schools that are impacted by current SeaTac Airport operations. This funding represents the state contribution to a partnership between the Highline School District, the Port of Seattle, and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Local students deserve the same quality learning environment as children in the rest of the state.

Sea-Tac Occupational Skills Center

Although funding for the Sea-Tac Occupational Skills Center Summer School was originally slated to be eliminated, we were able to restore money for this incredibly successful program. Since 1983, the state has funded a summer school at the Sea-Tac Occupational Skills Center helping students to explore careers and begin acquiring job skills at an earlier age. The summer school serves 500-600 local students every year.



Pediatric Interim Care Center

Funding for this Kent clinic that provides care to drug-affected newborns was once again threatened. The House budget initially proposed letting the Department of Social & Health Services (DSHS) decide how much money (if any) the clinic would receive. We were able to stop that move and restore the direct line-item appropriation for the PICC – a clinic that has saved taxpayers more than \$25 million over the past twelve years by caring for babies at a fraction of hospital costs.

